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ABSTRACT

This in-basket-simulation learning module on the activities of an administrative secretary in the office of the State Treasurer for secondary and postsecondary teachers and students, the last in a series of eleven task and in-basket simulations, was designed to provide individualized instruction in office occupations courses, such as introductory business and typewriting. (Each of the modules in the set is designated A, B, or C, representing level of difficulty from, respectively, easy to difficult.) The module is divided into two parts. The first, developed for teacher use, includes the following: teacher instructions; definitions of task and in-basket simulations; objectives (in-basket tasks to prioritize); prior student experiences; necessary supplies and resources; completion time; method of evaluation; definitions of terminology; answer key; and answer sheet. The second part, developed for student use, includes the following: objectives (in-basket tasks to prioritize); prior student experiences; necessary supplies and resources; description of simulation situation; instructions; and in-basket items to prioritize. (The module was developed around performance objectives 4 and 11 of the V-TECS [Vocational-Technical Education Consortium of States] Secretarial Catalog. Some other related office occupations instructional materials are available in ERIC--see note. (EM)

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IN-BASKET SIMULATION

WORD PROCESSING

TEACHER

A

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY FOR THE OFFICE OF THE STATE TREASURER

Developed by

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TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS

The task and in-basket simulations have been developed to supplement performance objectives in the V-TECS Secretarial Catalog. The simulations are designed for individualized instruction and can be used in several office occupations courses. Teachers involved in a 1976 EPDA workshop wrote the simulations and tested these materials in their classrooms. Suggested time limits may vary according to the ability and experience of your students.

The level of difficulty is noted on each simulation. "A" indicates an easy simulation, "B" average, and "C" difficult. This rating may vary according to the capabilities of your students. Pre-tests are included in the task simulations.

Students should not write on the simulations. Answer sheets for the in-basket simulations are included in the teacher materials and should be duplicated as needed. The teacher key for in-basket simulations reflects one correct method of listing priorities. Evaluation should be flexible. If a student can justify answers which differ from the suggested answers, they should be accepted as correct. You may prefer to use the in-basket simulations as learning experiences rather than for evaluation purposes.

Teachers should complete each simulation before making assignments to students. You must be familiar with the contents in order to answer questions. Avoid giving too many directions and hints. The purpose of the simulations is to teach your students to think and to make decisions under pressure.

Prior to using the Word Processing simulations, students should be familiar with the list of terms which accompanies each word processing simulation.

DEFINITIONS

A task simulation is an instructional technique in which the learner performs several different tasks. The simulation requires that the learner use previously acquired skills and knowledge in order to complete the tasks. An in-basket simulation is a technique in which a specific position is described and in which the learner is required to make decisions about the priority of each task described in the simulation. In an in-basket simulation, tasks are not performed by the student but are listed in order of priority.

THIS SIMULATION CORRELATES WITH V-TECS OBJECTIVES 4 AND 11 IN THE SECRETARIAL CATALOG.

TITLE:

Administrative Secretary for the Office of the State Treasurer

OBJECTIVE:

Given numerous tasks in which an administrative secretary would be expected to perform in a government office, you are to list the tasks in their order of priority within 20 minutes.

PRIOR STUDENT EXPERIENCE:

The student should have been instructed in surveying tasks, making decisions, and arranging tasks in priority order.

NECESSARY SUPPLIES AND RESOURCES:

Pen or pencil, scratch paper, answer sheet and V-TECS Secretarial Catalog are needed to do this simulation.

COMPLETION TIME:

20 minutes

METHOD OF EVALUATION:

Evaluation of an in-basket exercise must be flexible. There may be some variations in the way students separate the items into tasks and list them in priority order. Even though students' answers may be different from those on the answer key, they should be given full credit if the student can justify the answers. The key that is given is a suggested way of arranging the tasks in order.

The teacher should give each task a weight of 9 points–2 points for identifying each task, 3 points for categorizing the priority correctly, and 4 points for putting tasks in the proper priority sequence.

WORD PROCESSING TERMINOLOGY

1. Word processing is the automation of the typing function starting with the dictator (word originator) and ending with the dispatch of the written document. It involves the use of power or automated typing machines, magnetic dictation units, and rapid messenger service back to the originator.

2. MCST stands for magnetic card selectric typewriter.

3. MTST stands for magnetic tape selectric typewriter.

4. A memory typewriter is an automatic typewriter which can store recorded material in its memory. This material can be recalled and used at a later time. As many as 200,000 characters can be stored in this machine.

5. A correspondence secretary is a person whose principal duty is production typing.

6. An administrative secretary is a secretary whose duties include various secretarial tasks other than production typing.

7. An originator is a dictator.

8. A principal is a person who is assisted by one or more administrative secretaries.

9. Automatic typewriters are any typewriters that are controlled by automated means. Various input medias such as magnetic cards, magnetic tape, etc., are used with these machines.

10. Turn around time is the time it takes the document to get from the originator through the center and back to the originator.

11. Reverse printout is a process in which the typewriter prints from left to right, as is usual, and on the next line will print from right to left. Xerox and Linolex companies use the reverse printout principle.

12. A cathode ray tube is an electronic vacuum tube containing a screen on which information can be displayed. The abbreviation CRT is frequently used to refer to a cathode ray tube.

ANSWER KEY

ORDER	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	ITEM	EXPLANATION
1.	IMM	H	Vault alarm went off--call police station
2.	IMM	H	Vault alarm went off--call repair service to get the alarm cut off and reset
3.	IMP	A	Mr. Williams' mail
4.	IMP	B	Ms. Penway's mail
5.	IMP	E	Interview at noon--get file folder ready
6.	IMP	C	Clip bond coupons and get to bank by 1 p.m.
7.	IMP	E	Get refreshments ready for meeting at 3 p.m. in Conf. Room
8.	ROU	G	Letter for Ms. Penway--not urgent
9.	HOL	D	Announcement for bond bidding to printer by Friday
10.	HOL	D	Pick up bond bidding announcement on Monday morning
11.	HOL	F	Get list of members of NAAT by first of September

ANSWER SHEET

Directions: List the tasks in the order you would do them. Make sure you give a brief explanation of why you placed each task where you did.

ORDER	LEVEL OF PRIORITY	ITEM	EXPLANATION
Ex.	IMM	T	Call Mr. Thompson
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			
11.			
12.			
13.			
14.			
15.			

IN-BASKET SIMULATION

WORD PROCESSING

STUDENT

A

ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY FOR THE OFFICE OF THE STATE TREASURER

Developed by

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ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY FOR THE OFFICE OF THE STATE TREASURER

OBJECTIVE:

Given numerous tasks which an administrative secretary would be expected to perform in a government office, list the tasks in their order of priority within 20 minutes.

PRIOR STUDENT EXPERIENCE:

Prior instruction in office procedures has emphasized that secretaries must be able to survey the tasks they are asked to do and arrange them into priority order.

NECESSARY SUPPLIES AND RESOURCES:

Pen or pencil, scratch paper, an answer sheet.

SITUATION:

You are employed as an administrative secretary for the Office of the State Treasurer. You handle administrative tasks for the Assistant Treasurer, Mr. Lester Williams, and for the Investments Specialist, Ms. Delaine Penway. Mr. Williams and Ms. Penway have been employees of the state for 14 and 15 years, respectively.

Most of the correspondence in the office is handled in the word processing unit by the corresponding secretaries. However, both Mr. Williams and Ms. Penway depend on you for all correspondence and communications of a confidential nature.

Your work day begins at 8:15 a.m. and ends at 4:45 p.m. You have just entered the office. Jane, the receptionist, has already separated the mail and hands you all Mr. Williams' and Ms. Penway's mail.

Your name is William. It is Monday morning, July 27. After reading the instructions at the top of the next page, you are to assume that the tasks that follow are on your desk and you are to decide what to do and when to do it.

INSTRUCTIONS:

On the next several pages you will find various tasks that need to be taken care of by you in your position as administrative secretary in the treasurer's office.

Examine each task carefully. Some items may contain more than one task. Write each task and its level of priority on scratch paper, then use your answer sheet to record the tasks in the correct order. Use the following scale to determine the level of priority of each task:

IMMEDIATE:
Those tasks that need to be completed at once.

IMPORTANT:
Those tasks that need to be completed within the next hour or two.

ROUTINE:

Those tasks that should be completed after the immediate and important ones have been taken care of, tasks that can be done either today or tomorrow.

HOLD:

Those tasks that are not urgent, but need to be done and should be done when all the others are completed, probably within a week would be suitable.

ITEM A

ITEM B

MS. PENWAY'S MAIL

MR. WILLIAMS' MAIL

ITEM C

FROM THE DESK OF LESTER WILLIAMS

Monday

Bill,

Interest on the municipal bonds is due today at the bank. Will you get the bonds from the vault and clip the coupons.

They need to be at the bank before it closes at 1 P.M. Thanks

LW

ITEM D

A NOTE FROM DELAINE PENWAY

William,

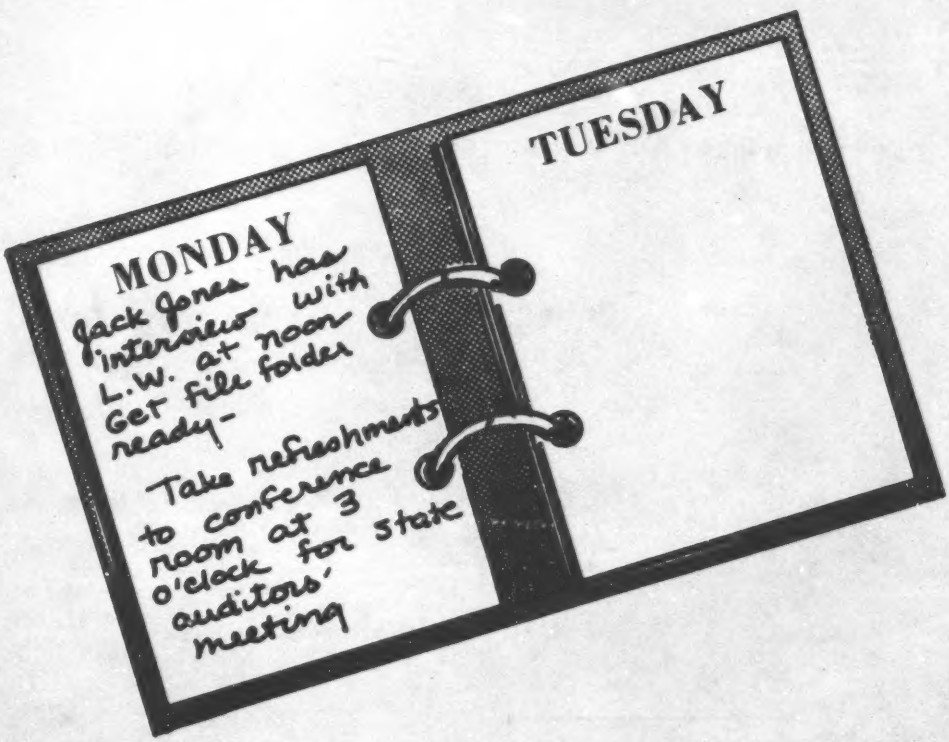
Please get the bond bid announcement to the printer by Friday. He says he will have it ready by Monday.

Will you pick it up on your way to work Monday-

Thanks,

D.P.

ITEM E


MONDAY
Jack Jones has interview with L.W. at noon Get file folder ready-
Take refreshments to conference room at 3 o'clock for state auditors' meeting
TUESDAY

FROM THE DESK OF LESTER WILLIAMS

Monday

Bill,

As President-Elect of the National Association of Assistant Treasurers, I will need a list of members. Write the national office and get the list for me. I will need it by September when I write my first newsletter

Thanks

LW

ITEM F

A NOTE FROM DELAINE PENWAY

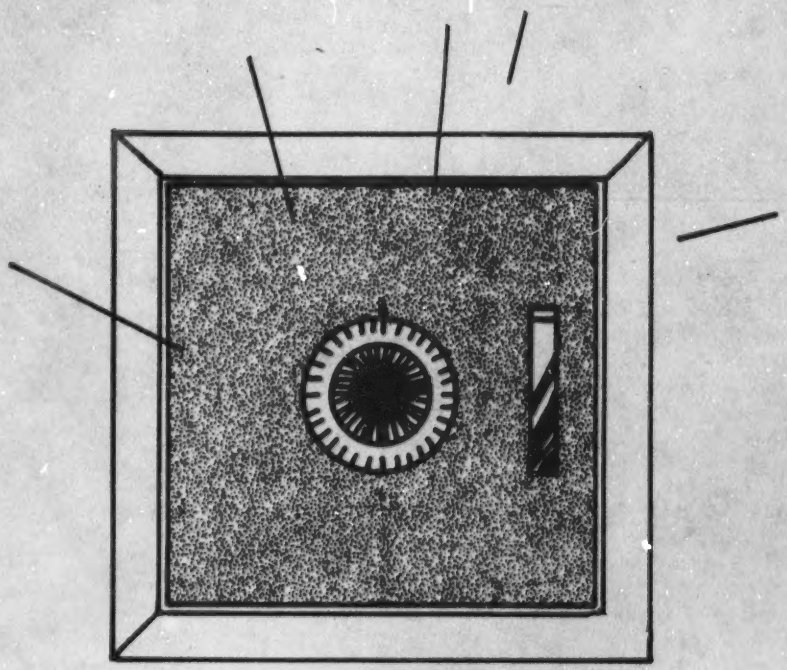
William,

Please revise the attached letter for me and send it to the correspondence secretaries for final copy.

Thanks,

D.P.

ITEM G



ITEM H

The vault alarm just went off accidentally. Call the confidential police number so they won't think a robbery is in progress. You will also need to call the repair service to get the alarm turned off and reset.